

Docket Optical System - Another advantage of the proposed HERS II rating scale (where a lower score is better)

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There has been some debate as to whether the proposed new HERS rating system where zero equals zero net energy and 100 represents average energy consumption, the main concern being that this "lower is better" scoring system is counter-intuitive for Americans who are more accustomed to scores where higher scores represent "better."

Here is an NPR story that reveals the mathematical illusion inherent in the miles/gallon measure of fuel efficiency in the US ("higher is better"), and how it can lead to poor decisions that result in less improvement in fuel consumption when buying cars. Alternatively, the liters/100km measure used in the rest of the world provides an accurate measure of incremental improvement when comparing options. This is a great analogy for the HERS rating system alternatives, and raises important points considering that our primary aim with the HERS II rating system is to improve the worst-performing homes in the existing building stock.

Listen at: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=91703607&ft=1&f=100>

If we do go to a "lower is better" HERS scoring system it would be prudent to do some consumer testing of options for the scale to ensure that it is designed to be as intuitive as possible and to address any unforeseen areas of confusion or misinterpretation.

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